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ABSTRACT

Independence for Mexico took 11 years to achieve. Before its independence Mexico was ruled by Spain and had a basic caste system of indios, mestizos, criollos, and gachupines. The gachupines and criollos ruled the government and exploited the indios and mestizos. When the criollos became dissatisfied with being secondary to the gachupines, they began talking about a revolution. On 16 de septiembre, Father Miguel Hidalgo gave his "Grito de Independencia" speech stating a revolution was inevitable. There were 2 stages to the revolution. The first stage (under Father Hildago and Jose Maria Morelos) was aimed at changing colonial class, political, economic, and cultural systems of New Spain. The final stage of the revolution (under Agustin de Iturbide) left things just as they had been during the colonial period. This contradiction in the movement led to the formation of 2 main political parties--liberals and conservatives. As objectives of this unit the students will demonstrate their comprehension of "el 16 de septiembre" by correctly answering orally the discussion questions. The poem "Corrido de la Independencia" is included. (NQ)

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1810
MODULE
Secondary Level

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Objectives

1. The student will read with comprehension the unit on "el 16 de septiembre."

2. The student will demonstrate his comprehension of the unit by correctly answering the discussion questions, orally.

Activities

1. Read unit on "el 16 de septiembre".

2. Orally discuss study questions in class.

3. Have students listen and sing "El corrido de la Independencia."

4. Optional - Have students write their own version of the story in their vernacular.

5. Optional - Have students draw their own illustrations.

To understand the activities of the 16 de septiembre, it is first necessary to understand the political and social situation of México in the colonial period. México was ruled by Spain and had a basic caste system of: indios, mestizos, criollos and gachupines.

The indios were the most oppressed[1] and exploited[2] group, being divided from the others by both language and culture. The indios worked the great haciendas owned by the gachupines and, as slaves, had no rights or responsibilities as citizens.

The mestizos, who were a mixture of both Indian and Spanish blood, considered themselves above the Indians but were looked down upon by the gachupines and criollos. The mestizos took low-level, low paying jobs because of their color but were not slaves and had more choice of their destiny than did the indios.

Criollos, or those of pure Spanish blood who were born in the new world, were considered full persons. However, they did not have the political strength or wealth of those born in Spain. They were still dominated by the gachupines although they felt superior to and oppressed the indios y mestizos. Criollos became the priests, lawyers, doctors, army officers and lower-echelon[3] government officials.

The smallest and most priviledged group were the gachupines or Spaniards born in Spain. They came to the new world to exploit its wealth and returned to Spain to enjoy their riches. They controlled the government, the military, the Church and owned the lands and mines worked by the landless poor.

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[1]oppressed - to be treated cruelly and inhumanely

[2]exploited - to take advantage of someone

[3]lower-echelon - low ranking

The government at this time was ruled by gachupines y criollos who exploited the indios and mestizos. However, the criollos became disatisfied with their position as secondary to the gachupines. They saw that more than half of the profits and earnings of the New World were returned to Spain in the form of taxes. Although they considered themselves superior to the darker-skinned inhabitants of the new world, they did not adhere to the philosophy that preference be given to those born in Spain.

The criollos were also greatly influenced by the independence won by the United States, the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution.[4] Political meetings were held, in secret, in which issues of the day were discussed.

The most famous of those who talked and dreamed of the revolution was Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, a parish priest in the village of Dolores, Guanajuato. Hidalgo believed in the independence of Mexico and tried to organized the indios and mestizos to develop artistic skills such as pottery making. As a result, he was well-liked and respected in his parish.

Hidalgo came to know Don Ignacio Allende, a criollo capitan in the Spanish regiment who was also interested in making Mexico independent. Allende, along with his two brothers and several other military friends began to plot an insurrection.[5] The local point of the insurrection was to begin in Queretaro with the help of Don Miguel Dominguez, the corregidor[6] in Queretaro. The movement grew stronger day by day and only needed a leader of enough influence and strength to carry it through-hence Hidalgo was contacted to become the leader.

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[4]Industrial Revolution - mechanization era in England

[5]insurrection - local revolt

[6]corregidor - a Spanish magistrate; a town mayor

Santiago López

The conspiracy was discovered by the gachupines in Queretaro, and the viceroy ordered the homes searched of all those involved. Doña Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez, a strong and capable woman who was called "el alma de la conspiración" sent messengers to warn Allende and Hidalgo of the Spanish threat. Allende and Hidalgo decided there was no choice but to immediately begin el "Grito de Independencia"--it was the 16 de septiembre.

Hidalgo met with a group of indios and mestizos that night and early the next morning at mass, he gave his famous "Grito de Dolores" speech ending it with the emotional shout, "Viva America! Viva nuestra Santisima Virgen de Guadalupe! Muera el mal govierno!"

The indios, armed with nothing but their everyday working tools--machetes, cuchillos, hachas, etc., joined Hidalgo and the mob headed to San Miguel, which they easily captured.

For a while, Hidalgo seemed to lose control of the mobs of indios and mestizos who wanted to avenge the hated gachupines. Allende's dragoons[7] joined Hidalgo's insurgentes[8] who marched to Celaya four thousand strong, arresting gachupines and looting their stores on the way. Before the end of the month, 12,000 insurgentes invaded Guanajuato, the second richest city in the new Spain because of its silver.

The gachupines along with three million pesos, hid in Granaditas, the thick-walled granary for safety. Gunfire was exchanged and many people on both sides were killed. However, the Indians still could not break the heavy door that protected the Granaditas. A young Indian miner nicknamed

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[7]dragoons - troops on horses

[8]insurgents - revolutionaries

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"El Pípila" covered himself with a flagstone for protection, crept among the strewn bodies clenching a torch, and set the building afire. After the fall of Granaditas, Hidalgo named new authorities for the city and tried to reorganize his troops.

On the 19th of October, also in Guanajuato, Hidalgo decreed the end of slavery in Mexico. Under penalty of death, slaves could no longer be bought or sold. About this same time, Hidalgo was excommunicated[9] from the Church by the Bishop of Michoacan for being "a revolutionary and an enemy of the social order."

Jose María Morelos y Pavón, a priest from the southern part of Mexico, came to Hidalgo asking to join his troops. Hidalgo placed him in charge of the insurrection in southern Mexico. This was the first and only time these two men would meet.

Hidalgo continued his revolt, but could not always control his growing troops. After each victory, hundreds more would join the victorious indios.

Hidalgo, Allende and their troops went to Valladolid, marched on and defeated the royalists soundly. They were about 80,000 strong by now. The way was open to Mexico City. But for some unexplained reason, Hidalgo refused to capture the capital and instead went back to Guanajuato. There they met the royalist[10] troops under General Calleja and they defeated Hidalgo's troops. Hidalgo's army began to dwindle and so did the morale of the people. Hidalgo and Allende attempted to go to the United States

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[9]excommunicated - to be thrown out of the church

[10]royalist - supporters of the gauchupine government

El Pípila, an Indian miner, tied a stone to his back for protection from gunfire and set fire to the Granaditas in Guanajuato.

and ask for aid, but were captured in Coahuila by a former supporter, Elizondo. They were sent to Chihuahua for trial. Hidalgo was derobed[11] and both he and Allende were convicted and executed on July 30, 1811. Their heads along with two of Hidalgo's other executed leaders, were sent to Guanajuato and placed on the four corners of the grainary to serve as a reminder to all future revolutionaries.

Father Hidalgo had died but his cause was still alive. People like Morelos, Vicente Guerrero and Guadalupe Victoria still had their commitments to the ideals of independence. Hidalgo is affectionately known as "El padre de la patria."

Father Morelos became the leader of the revolution after Hidalgo's execution. He was mestizo and an early student of Hidalgo. Morelos came to be recognized as one of the greatest military leaders and political thinkers of his era.

By the end of 1811, Morelos was in control of Southern Mexico--from the Valley of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean, except the port of Acapulco.

The royalist opposition was led by General Felix Calleja who was very effective, but harsh. Calleja caught Morelos and his troops at Cuaútla and laid siege to the city for 2 1/2 months. On May 2, 1812, Morelos and his troops escaped to Izúcar and though Calleja was credited with a victory, Morelos scored a brilliant retreat which lessened Calleja's victory. From there, Morelos strengthened his hold on Southern Mexico and attacked the royalist forces in Oaxaca and was victorious. The royalists retreated

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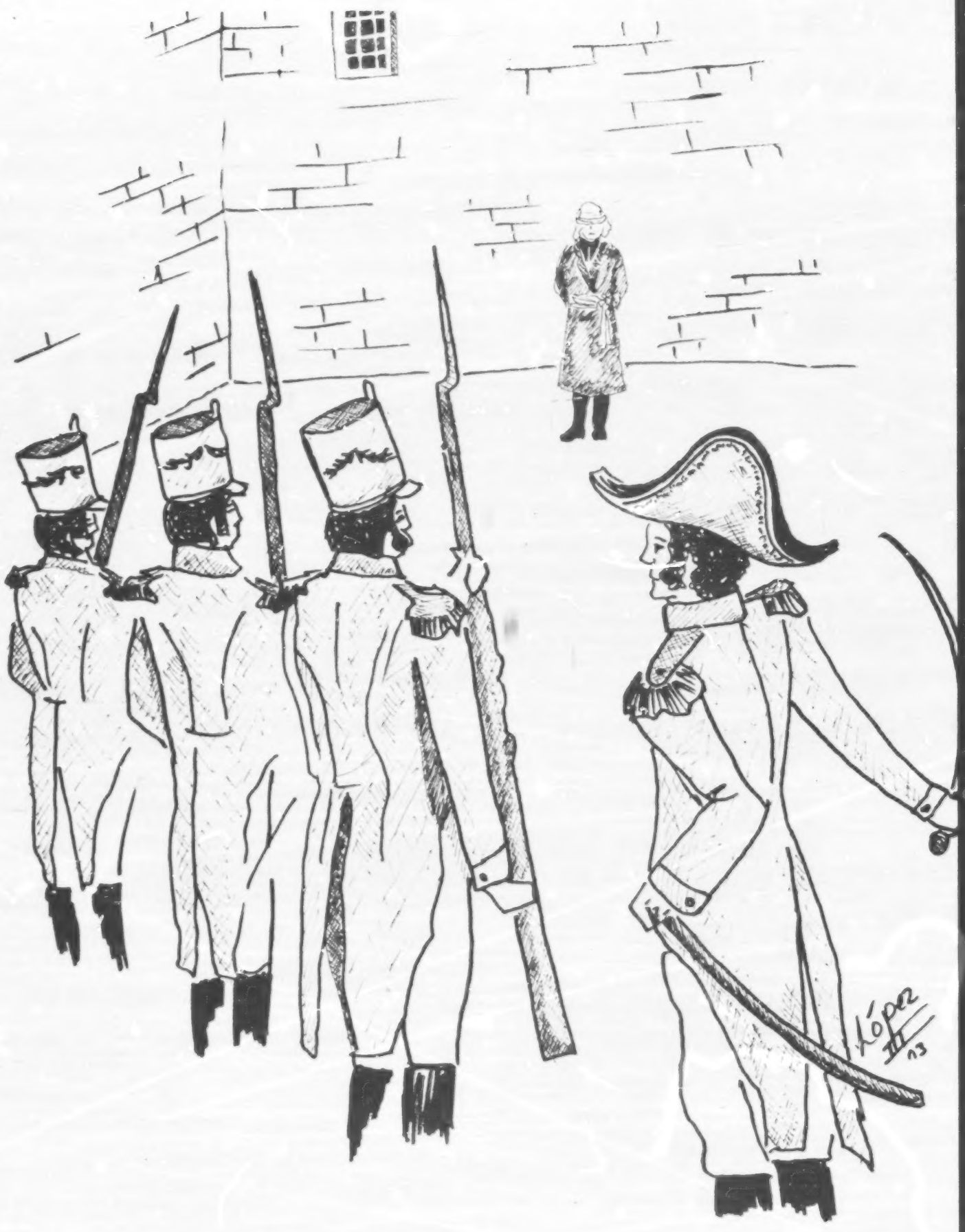
[11]derobed - remove from the priesthood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to Acapulco and Morelos and his troops pursued them. They laid siege to the port and finally in the summer of 1813, after much effort, the port of Acapulco was captured. These were the most famous military victories for Morelos and his troops.

Morelos called for a Congress at Chilpancingo, with the purpose of establishing a republic. A Constitution was drawn up calling for the redistribution of land, a provisional (temporary) government was set up and Morelos was made commander-in-chief.

Calleja became viceroy and started to move against Morelos in late 1813. His forces defeated Morelos and his rebels at Valladolid. Among Calleja's troops was a young officer, Augustin de Iturbide, who was to become emperor of Mexico.

The Royalist forces pursued Morelos along the coast. Morelos' friend and general, Hermegildo Galeana was defeated and killed; upon receiving the news, Morelos exclaimed, "Se acabaron mis dos brazos; ya soy nada."

Morelos went to Texmalaca and there was defeated by the royalists. He was betrayed by Matias Carrasco and captured. Before he was executed, Morelos wrote, "Morir es nada cuando por la Patria se muere." He was sentenced, degraded and executed on December 22, 1815.

Calleja was replaced as viceroy by Juan Apodaca who offered the rebels generous terms. It was thought the revolution was over.

Several rebels in the mountains continued their fight-Vicente Guerrero and Guadalupe Victoria. Their constant struggle gave hope to the revolutionary movement.

MONCLOVA
GOLFO
DE
MEXICO
DURANGO
ZACATECAS
SAN MIGUEL
DOLORES
GUADALAJARA
GUANAJUATO
QUERETARO
OCEANO
PACIFICO
VALLADOLID
VERACRUZ
MEXICO
OAXACA
ACAPULCO

Iturbide was placed in command of a force sent by Viceroy Apodaca to crush Guerrero hiding in the mountains. He marched and counter-marched, engaged in a few skirmishes[12] and demanded more men and money from the viceroy. When he failed to receive the money, he convinced some merchants in Mexico City to send a shipment of a half-million pesos to Acapulco under his protection. However, when the shipment reached Iguala, Iturbide's headquarters, the general simply took it for himself.

When Iturbide discovered he could not defeat or make the rebel surrender, Guerrero was invited to join him. A very suspicious Guerrero finally did. With Guerrero and the stolen money on his side, Iturbide "pronounced" for independence in the Plan de Iguala on February 24, 1821 and invited all to join together.

When the other rebels heard Guerrero was joining Iturbide, they also put down their arms and sided with them. Soon Guadalupe Victoria joined Guerrero and Iturbide and all prepared to march into Mexico City. On September 27, 1821, Agustín de Iturbide with Vicente Guerrero and Guadalupe Victoria on each side, marched triumphantly into Mexico City.

Such is the manner Independence was achieved it had taken eleven years. The first stage of the revolt (under Hidalgo and Morelos) wanted to change the colonial class, political, economic and cultural systems of New Spain. But the final stage of the revolution (under Iturbide) did not bring about these changes. Instead it left things just as they were during the colonial period.

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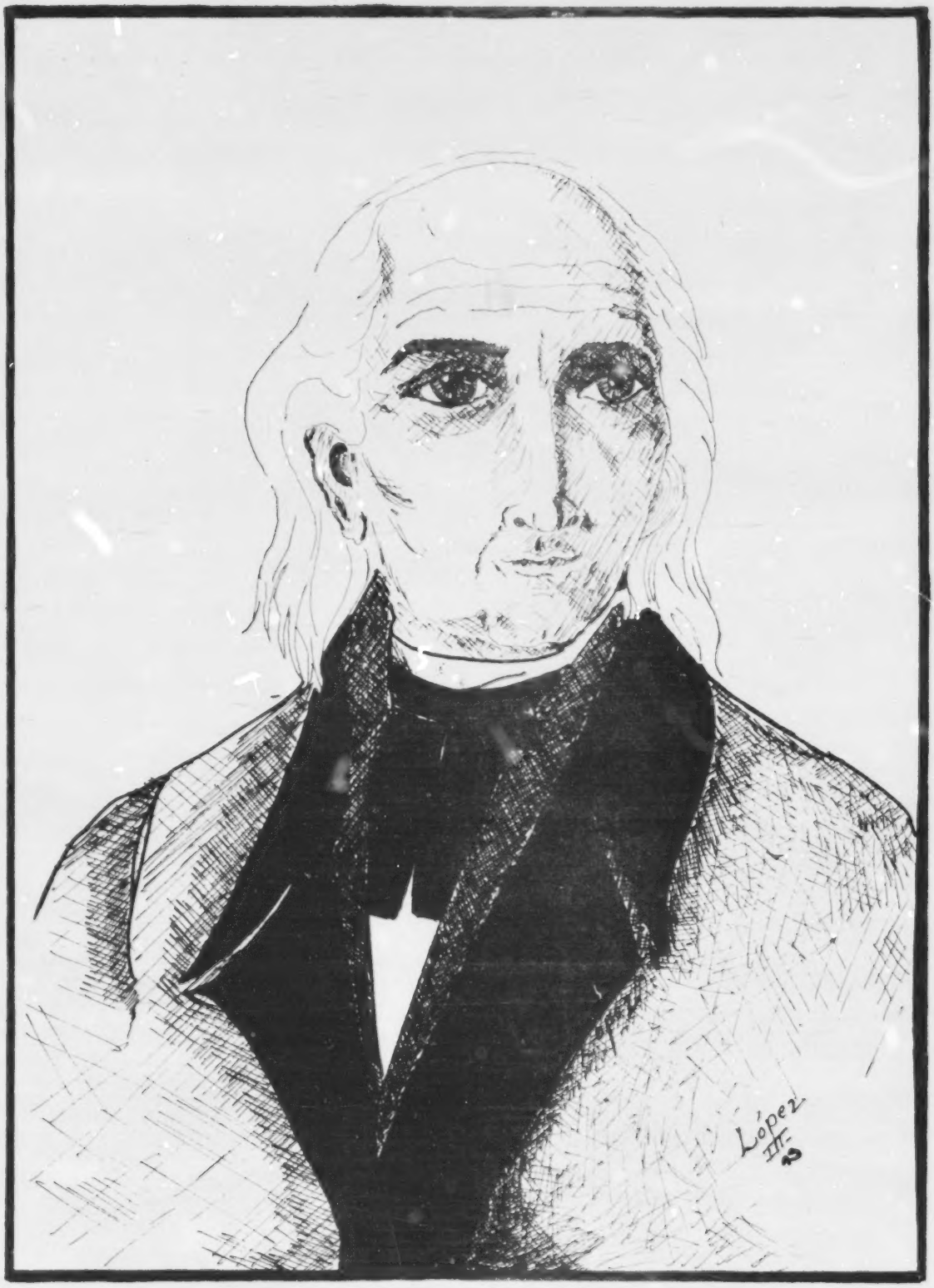
[12]skirmishes - small battles

It is with this contradiction that the Independence movement led to the formation of two main political parties--the liberal and conservative. For many years to come these two parties were to cause much division and bloodshed in Mexico.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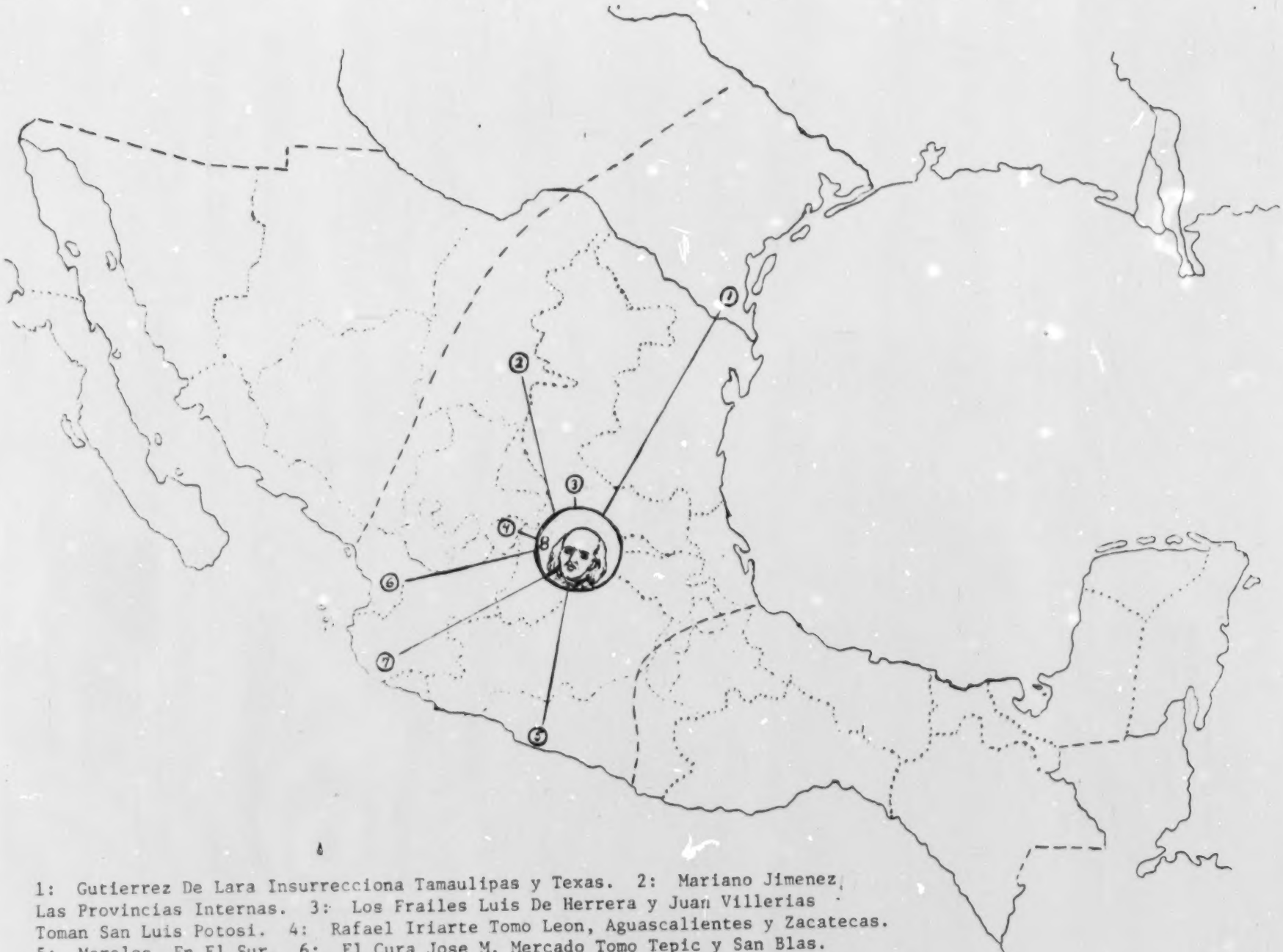

1: Gutierrez De Lara Insurrecciona Tamaulipas y Texas. 2: Mariano Jimenez, Las Provincias Internas. 3: Los Frailes Luis De Herrera y Juan Villerias Toman San Luis Potosi. 4: Rafael Iriarte Tomo Leon, Aguascalientes y Zacatecas. 5: Morelos, En El Sur. 6: El Cura Jose M. Mercado Tomo Tepic y San Blas. 7: El Amo "Torres" Tomo Guadalajara. 8: Hidalgo Inicio En Dolores La Independencia.

Study Questions

1. What were the four social classes and what was the role of each?
2. Who was Father Hidalgo? Why was he called, "El Padre de la Patria"?
3. Why do you think Father Hidalgo refused to take Mexico City when total victory seemed so near? (Opinions)
4. Who was Doña Josefa Ortiz de Dominguez? What was she called? What was she called? What was her role in the fight for independence?
5. Who was Father Morelos? In what ways was he different from Father Hidalgo?
6. Compare and contrast the roles of Hidalgo and Morelos as military leaders.
7. What was the role of the Church during the revolution? What divisions could you see among the clergy?
8. Did the revolutionaries finally achieve their original goals?
9. Is el 16 de septiembre relevant to the Chicano movememt? Why?

CORRIDO DE LA INDEPENDENCIA

Angel Salas

El 16 de Septiembre
de mil ochocientos diez,
nació nuestra independencia,
glorioso ochocientos diez
en el pueblo de Dolores.
Hidalgo la proclamó
y ayudado por el pueblo
Guerrero la consumó.
Al toque de la campana
acudio la multitud
a pelear por nuestra Pátria
que sufría la esclavitud.
Se dirigió aquella noche
con toda su altiva grey
al pueblo de Atotonilco
a combatir al Virrey.

El abrazo de Acatempan
nuestro pueblo contempió
hizo cesar la contienda
y la libertad nació.
Ya con ésta me despido
de la gente que me oyó,
y aquí se acaba el corrido
que este gallo les cantó.